

Sugar maple, basswood, beech, slippery elm, red oak, and ironwood characterize the mesic southern hardwood community. Less predominant species, including white ash, white oak, bitternut hickory, and butternut are also commonly found in mesic southern hardwood communities (Curtis, 1959).

### **3.3.6 Wildlife and Aquatic Species**

The wooded uplands and lowlands and the surface waters in the project area provide wildlife habitat to species commonly found in southern Wisconsin. The woods are likely used by mammal species, such as deer, raccoons, squirrels, and chipmunks, for food sources and cover. Birds, such as turkey, ruffed grouse, hawks, owls, and many songbirds, may also use the woods for food, cover, and nesting. The streams in the project area support aquatic invertebrates and provide food and cover for many species of fish (Table 3.3.6) amphibians, reptiles, and waterfowl.

Mammals, such as muskrats, may also use the streams for food and cover. The wetlands and stream banks are likely used by amphibians, reptiles, and waterfowl for breeding, food, and cover, and serve as a water source for mammals.

The agricultural land may be utilized by wildlife. Croplands may provide food and cover for some mammals and bird species, including deer, rabbits, turkey, and partridge. Pastures also benefit wildlife by providing food for mammals and breeding areas for many birds and insects, which are in turn a food source for many predator species.

### **3.3.7 Endangered and Threatened Species**

The United States Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) indicated that no federally listed endangered species occur near the project area. However, one federally listed threatened species, the eastern prairie fringed orchid, was indicated to occur near the project area (see letters from the USFWS and DATCP in Appendix A). A field survey was conducted in the summer of 1999 to identify the location of this species. It was determined that the orchid and its habitat occurred over one mile west of existing STH 26.

The Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources Bureau of Endangered Resources (WDNR-BER) indicated that several state special concern, threatened, or endangered plants and vertebrates may be present within or near the project area (see letter from the WDNR-BER in Appendix A). Table 3.3.7 lists the state endangered, threatened, and special concern species identified by the WDNR-BER as either occurring or having historically occurred in the vicinity of the project.

### **3.3.8 Natural and Conservancy Areas**

The Wisconsin Natural Areas Preservation Council defines natural areas as tracts of land or water so little modified by man's activity or sufficiently recovered from the effects of such activity, that they contain intact, native plant and animal communities believed to be representative of the landscape as it existed before settlement by Euro-Americans. Natural plant communities officially listed on the natural Heritage Inventory by the WDNR include the following areas as listed below. The natural areas located within the study area in each segment are shown on [Figures 3.3.9.1, 3.3.9.2, and 3.3.9.3](#). These areas are also described in the letter correspondence from the WDNR-BER attached in [Appendix A](#).

**TABLE 3.3.7**  
**RARE SPECIES IN OR NEAR THE PROJECT AREA**  
**FOR WHICH RECENT OR HISTORICAL RECORDS EXIST**

Species	State Status	Preferred Habitat
<b>Plants</b>		
Prairie sagewort ( <i>Artemisia frigida</i> )	Special Concern	Rocky bluff prairies or sand prairies with open sandy soil.
Richardson sedge ( <i>Carex richardsonii</i> )	Special Concern	Sandy open ground often bordering oak woods.
Downy willow herb ( <i>Epilobium strictum</i> )	Special Concern	Northern sedge meadows but also found in tamarack and cedar swamps, marshes, bogs, fens, and lakeshores.
Marsh horsetail ( <i>Equisetum palustre</i> )	Special Concern	Shores of rivers and lakes.
Marsh blazing star ( <i>Liatris spicata</i> )	Special Concern	Wet to wet-mesic prairies.
American gromwell ( <i>Lithospermum latifolium</i> )	Special Concern	Ungrazed rich dry-mesic deciduous woods.
Prairie dandelion ( <i>Nothocalius cuspidata</i> )	Special Concern	Dry and dry sand prairies.
Sycamore ( <i>Platanus occidentalis</i> )	Special Concern	Lowland forests.
Meadow parsnip ( <i>Thaspium trifoliatum</i> var. <i>flavum</i> )	Special Concern	Prairies, woodland edges and thickets.
Prairie milkweed ( <i>Asclepias sullivantii</i> )	Threatened	Mesic prairies.
Prairie Indian plantain ( <i>Cacalia tuberosa</i> )	Threatened	Deep soil mesic and wet-mesic prairies, prairie remnants, and railroad right-of-ways.
Prairie thistle ( <i>Cirsium hillii</i> )	Threatened	Dry, hilly prairies and occasionally railroad right-of-ways.
White ladies slipper ( <i>Cypripedium candidum</i> )	Threatened	Moist, calcareous soils of wet or mesic prairies, or open fens.
Pale Purple Coneflower ( <i>Echinacea pallida</i> )	Threatened	Dry prairies and other dry open places.
Prairie bush clover ( <i>Lespedeza leptostachya</i> )	Threatened	Dry, upland prairies.
Tubercled orchid ( <i>Platanthera flava herbiola</i> )	Threatened	Wet prairies and meadows, alder thickets, lowland woods, bottomlands, and swales.
Prairie white-fringed orchid ( <i>Platanthera leucophaea</i> )	Threatened	Wet prairies, wet meadows, bogs, and other open grassy areas.
Prairie parsley ( <i>Polytania nuttallii</i> )	Threatened	Dry prairies, railroad right-of-ways, and dry, grassy banks along rivers.
Pink milkwort ( <i>Polygala incarnata</i> )	Endangered	Dry prairies.
Rough white lettuce ( <i>Prenanthes aspera</i> )	Endangered	Dry prairies and barrens.
<b>Fish</b>		
American eel ( <i>Anguilla rostrata</i> )	Special Concern	Large streams and lakes with muddy bottoms and still waters.
Least darter ( <i>Etheostoma microperca</i> )	Special Concern	Clear, warm, quiet waters of small streams, pools, ponds, and lakes over substrates of gravel, silt, and sand.
Pugnose minnow ( <i>Notropis emiliae</i> )	Special Concern	Quiet, weedy lakes, sloughs, and low gradient rivers over bottoms of mud, sand, silt, rubble, gravel, or clay.
Weed shiner ( <i>Notropis texanus</i> )	Special Concern	Sloughs, lakes, and quiet sections of medium/large streams or rivers over substrates of sand or mud.
Redfin shiner ( <i>Lithrurus umbratilis</i> )	Threatened	Turbid waters of pools in, low gradient rivers/streams over substrates of silt, gravel, and rubble.
River redhorse ( <i>Moxostoma carinatum</i> )	Threatened	Moderate to swift currents in large river systems, including the lower portions of their tributaries, reservoirs, and pools, with river bottoms of clean gravel or rubble.
Greater redhorse ( <i>Moxostoma valenciennesi</i> )	Threatened	Clear water of large rivers, river reservoirs, and large lakes over bottoms of sand, gravel, or boulders.
Slender madtom ( <i>Noturus exilis</i> )	Endangered	Clear, moderate to swift currents of streams and large rivers over bottoms of gravel and boulders interspersed with fine sand.
<b>Reptiles and Amphibians</b>		
Blanding's turtle ( <i>Emydoidea blandingii</i> )	Threatened	Sedge meadows, southern wet and southern wet-mesic forest, wet and wet-mesic prairie, open-water marshes, backwater sloughs, prairie potholes, and large ponds, slow-moving rivers, and shallow lakes.
Blanchard's cricket frog ( <i>Acris crepitans blanchardi</i> )	Endangered	Marshes along rivers and river floodplains, fens, low prairies, and mud flats with abundant emergent vegetation.
Queen snake ( <i>Regina septemvittata</i> )	Endangered	Clear spring-fed streams with moderate to fast currents and rock bottoms, southern lowland forests, and shrub-carr communities.
<b>Mammals</b>		
Prairie vole ( <i>Microtus ochrogaster</i> )	Special Concern	Native dry and sandy prairies and slopes with moderate ground cover.
Franklin's ground squirrel ( <i>Spermophilus franklinii</i> )	Special Concern	Brushy and partly wooded areas, dense grassy, shrubby marshland, as well as prairie edges.
<b>Birds</b>		
Black-crowned night heron ( <i>Nycticorax nycticorax</i> )	Special Concern	Freshwater wetlands dominated by bulrush and cattail with small groves of alder, willow, or other brush.
Source: WDNR-BER correspondence, July 1, 1999.		

### 3.3.8.1 South Segment

**Storr's Lake Emergent Aquatic Community** occurs in Sections 25 and 26 in T4N R13E, Rock County. The Storr's Lake Wildlife Area is approximately 935 acres in size and includes habitat of scattered woodlots, marsh, grasslands, lake, and cropland. These open, marsh, lake, riverine and estuarine communities with permanent standing water are dominated by robust emergent macrophytes, in pure stands of single species or in various mixtures. Dominants typically include cattails, bulrushes, bur-reeds, giant reed, pickerel-weed, water-plantains, arrowheads, and the larger species of spikerush.

**Otter Creek** occurs in T4N R13E with resident populations of a state threatened reptile species.

**Otter Creek Springs** is a small spring complex in Section 11 of T4N R13E, Rock County. This community of springs and spring runs is one of the few left in the county, but has been quite disturbed in recent years. The bubbling springs are choked with watercress. Several rare submerged aquatic species have been reported from the site.

**Camp Wakowpa Forest** consists of a southern dry mesic forest occurring in Section 11 of T4N R13E, Rock County. This dry-mesic woods is dominated by white oak associated with bur oak, shagbark hickory and black cherry. Canopy species have more mesic affinities. Parts of the woods have been selectively logged and the understory is dense with brambles, an indication of past disturbance.

**Koshkonong Marsh** occurs in Sections 12, 13 and 24 in T5N R13E, and Sections 7, 18 and 19 in T5N R14E, Jefferson County. This approximately 1500-acre (600-ha) natural area consists of emergent aquatics, cattail-bulrush, slow-hard-warm stream and shallow-hard-seepage lake natural community types. This area includes a large cattail-common reed marsh on the west side of Lake Koshkonong that is bisected by the Rock River. Pockets of open water support submerged aquatic plants and water lilies. The area contains a diverse wildlife population and is owned by the WDNR.

### 3.3.8.2 Central Segment

**Koshkonong Marsh** occurs in both the South Segment and Central Segment. See the description above.

**Rock River in Jefferson County.** At least six rare species of fish have been noted as occurring in the reach of the Rock River occurring in T5N R13E, T5N R14E and T8N R15E. Rare mussels are also known from the Rock River. For this reason, suitability of substrate for mussels should be determined at any bridge crossing.

**Jefferson Railroad Prairie** is a wet to wet-mesic prairie with oak openings along the railroad just west of the Rock River, occurring in Section 22 and 27 of T6N R14E of Jefferson County. This area features two narrow quarter-mile long sections of prairie on the railroad right-of-way. Typical prairie species are present but are being encroached upon by shrubs. A small savanna with large bur oaks is adjacent to the tracks. A swale-like wet prairie and degraded wet-mesic prairie are located just east of the savanna. The area is surrounded by agricultural land.

**Johnson Creek Wayside Woods** along State Highway 26 occurs in Section 18 of T7N R15E, Jefferson County. This 10-acre (4-ha) stand of mesic woods includes sugar maple, basswood, and ash, as well as rare plants and one state listed plant species.

### 3.3.8.3 North Segment

**Rock River in Jefferson County.** See the description above for the Central Segment. T8N R15E occurs in the north segment.

### 3.3.9 Public Use Lands

South central Wisconsin offers a wide range of recreational opportunities, including parks, golf courses, and recreational trails. Several of these resources are present in the project area and are discussed below.

Snowmobile trails are located throughout Rock, Jefferson, and Dodge Counties and may therefore be affected by all three project segments. Private snowmobile clubs partially financed by snowmobile registration fees administered by the WDNR maintain the trails, which are leased from private property owners on a one-year basis. Three snowmobile trails cross existing STH 26 within the project limits.

#### 3.3.9.1 South Segment

South Segment public use lands are shown in [Figure 3.3.9.1](#). A section of the Ice Age National Scenic Trail is in the planning stages along an abandoned railroad corridor located west of STH 26 between Janesville and Milton. WisDOT owns much of the abandoned railroad corridor, with the remainder in private ownership. The section of the trail from IH 90 to Milton would be approximately 4.9 miles (7.9 km) long and would occupy approximately 96 acres (39 hectares). The Rock County Park and Conservation Division is working with local government and citizen groups on a proposal to develop the trail. Plans for the trail include two crossings of STH 26 outside of the abandoned railroad corridor.

One crossing is planned near Rotamer Road just north of IH 90. The Ice Age Trail crossing near Rotamer Road (see Exhibit 5, sheet 1) is planned to be an overpass bridge to accommodate hikers and bikers. All right-of-way required for STH 26 under this project currently exists at this location, and no new lands would be required. The City of Janesville in coordination with WisDOT is currently seeking funds for the crossing.

The second proposed crossing is at Storrs Lake Road within the City of Milton (see Exhibit 5, sheet 2). The Ice Age Trail is in the early planning stages at this location. It is proposed to link the City of Milton residents to the Milton House and the Storrs Lake Wildlife Area, both popular destinations, with a trail along Storrs Lake Road within public right-of-way.

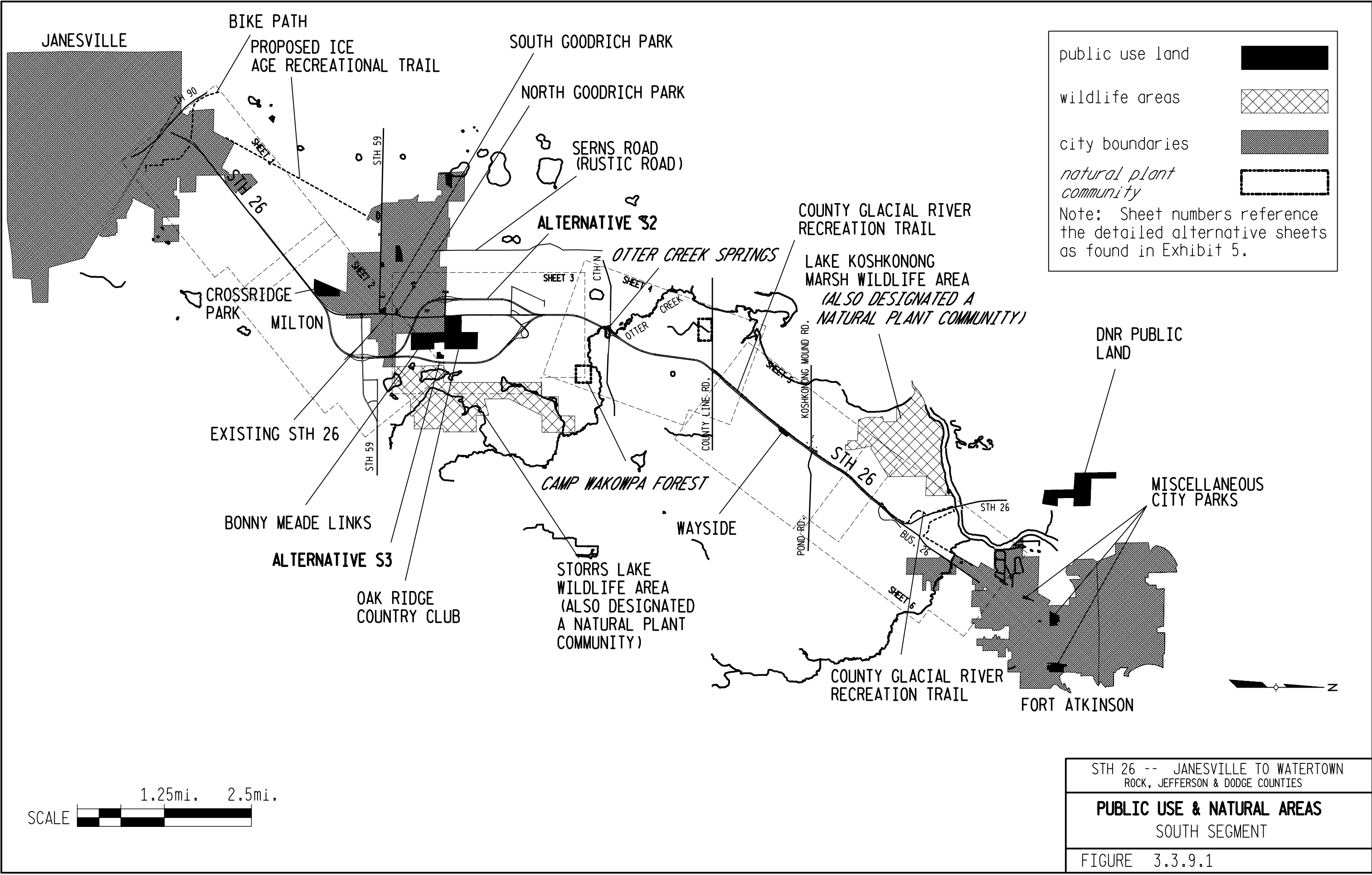
The Storrs Lake Wildlife Area is a 935-acre (378-hectare) wildlife area located one mile (1.6 km) east of the City of Milton on Storrs Lake Road. The state owns 783 acres (317 hectares) and leases 152 acres (62 hectares). The habitat includes scattered woodlots, marshes, grasslands, lakes, and cropland. Principal wildlife includes pheasants, ducks, squirrels, rabbits, various furbearers, and deer. Storrs Lake and Bowers Lake provide fishing and boating opportunities. Additional recreation includes hiking, cross-country skiing, and birdwatching. A gravel road provides public access to a small parking lot and boat landing.

Crossridge Park is a city-owned 43-acre (18-hectare) park in the City of Milton located in the northwest quadrant of STH 26 and Townline Road. This park is currently undeveloped and is planned to be used as a community park.

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South Goodrich Park is a city-owned 4.3-acre (1.8-hectare) park in the City of Milton located in the northwest quadrant of STH 26 and High Street and south of East Elementary School. It is Milton's oldest park and is located just south of several National Register historic structures, including the Milton House.

North Goodrich Park is a city-owned 1.7-acre (0.7-hectare) park in the City of Milton located in the southwest quadrant of STH 26 and STH 59-West. This park is located adjacent to several National Register historic structures including the Milton House, and serves as a parking and unloading facility for visitors to these places. Facilities include playground equipment, grills, picnic tables, shuffleboard courts, a drinking fountain, and restrooms.

The Oak Ridge Country Club is a 109-acre (44-hectare) 18-hole golf course in the City of Milton located in the northeast quadrant of STH 26 and Bowers Lake Road. This golf course is privately owned and open to the general public.

Bonny Meade Links is a 70-acre (28-hectare) 9-hole golf course near the City of Milton located in the Town of Milton east of STH 26 and south of Bowers Lake Road. This golf course is privately owned and open to the general public.

Serns Road is a 2.7-mile (4.4-km) paved roadway north of the City of Milton between North John Paul Road and CTH N. It is part of the Rustic Roads System created by the 1973 State Legislature in an effort to preserve what remains of Wisconsin's scenic, lightly traveled country roads for the leisurely enjoyment of bikers, hikers, and motorists. Serns Road is designated as a Rustic Road that crosses picturesque and gently rolling agricultural terrain.

The STH 26 Wayside is a state-owned 4.5-acre (1.8-hectare) highway wayside north of Milton located in the northeast quadrant of STH 26 and Vickerman Road. The Jefferson County Highway Department maintains this wayside.

The Lake Koshkonong Marsh Wildlife Area is an 884-acre (358-hectare) state-owned wildlife area located north of Koshkonong Mounds Road and 0.5-mile (0.8-km) west of STH 26 between Lake Koshkonong and Fort Atkinson. The habitat includes open water marsh, lake, scattered woods, and grassland. Principal wildlife includes waterfowl, deer, turkeys, pheasants, grassland songbirds, and sandhill cranes. This area provides snowmobiling, skiing, and boating opportunities.

The County Glacial River Recreation Trail is a Jefferson County 4.4-mile (7.1-km) trail that runs from Koshkonong Lake Road to Farmco Lane in Fort Atkinson. Approximately 1.6-miles (2.6-km) of the trail is located within the South Segment. The southern section from Koshkonong Lake Road to Old 26 occupies an abandoned railroad corridor for about 1.4-miles (2.3-km) along the west side of STH 26 and has a crushed limestone surface. The middle section from Old 26 to Groeler Road is about 2-miles (3.2-km) long and travels on paved paths and local roads along the Business 26 interchange. The northern section from Groeler Road to Farmco Lane is about 1-mile (1.6-km) long and is paved with asphalt. The trail goes through agricultural land, low wet areas, and some wooded areas, and it accommodates hikers, bikers, roller bladers, and cross-country skiers. The County plans to extend the trail southward in 1999-2000 within the abandoned railroad corridor from Koshkonong Lake Road to the Rock/Jefferson County line.



### 3.3.9.2 Central Segment

Central Segment public use lands are shown in [Figure 3.3.9.2](#). Approximately 2.8-miles (4.5-km) of the 4.4-mile (7.1-km) County Glacial River Recreation Trail is located within the Central Segment (see discussion above).

The Meadow Springs Golf Course is a 150-acre (61-hectare) 18-hole golf course located south of USH 18 and west of CTH Y in the City of Jefferson. This golf course is privately owned and open to the general public.

The Glacial Drumlin Trail is a state-owned 47-mile (76-km) trail developed in 1986 on an abandoned railroad grade. It extends between the Village of Cottage Grove in Dane County and the City of Waukesha in Waukesha County. A four-mile (6.4-km) gap in the trail with no designated routes is located north of the City of Jefferson between STH 26 and Switzke Road. Switzke Road is located about four miles (6.4 km) east of STH 26. The trail is open to bicyclists, hikers, and joggers during the summer and to snowmobilers and skiers during the winter. LWCF funds (Project 55-01626) were used to develop the trail.

Bicentennial Park is a 109-acre (44-hectare) Jefferson County property located along the east side of STH 26 approximately one mile (1.6-km) south of the Village of Johnson Creek (CTH Y). Land within the park includes natural areas that contain native plant communities and about 45 acres (18 hectares) of farmland. It is fenced and gated, and is currently open to the public as a dog park.

### 3.3.9.3 North Segment

North Segment public use lands are shown in [Figure 3.3.9.3](#). Quarry Park is a 167-acre (68-hectare) park located in the northwest portion of the City of Watertown next to the Watertown High School. This park was established in 1980 as a 12-acre (5-hectare) limited use area to be expanded as the adjoining City quarry is abandoned. The park is currently being developed and will include a recreational water resource when the quarry operations are completed. This park includes 3.7-miles (6.0-km) of hiking and cross-country ski trails and four soccer fields. LWCF funds were used to purchase the property.

The Watertown Country Club is a 130-acre (53-hectare) 18-hole golf course located northeast of the STH 26 and STH 16 interchange in the City of Watertown. This golf course is privately owned and not open to the public.

### 3.3.10 Archaeological Resources

An archival and literature search was conducted in the spring of 1999 to identify previously recorded archaeological and burial sites in the area. These initial identification efforts were conducted for an area extending 1 mile either side of existing STH 26. Previously recorded properties include:

- 851 Archaeological sites
- 52 Cemeteries
- 96 Native American known burial sites and mounds

Localities with high densities of previously known archaeological sites were identified in the area immediately surrounding Lake Koshkonong and in areas near the Rock and Crawfish Rivers. All reported cemeteries and burial sites were avoided in developing highway alternatives.

An archaeological field survey along existing STH 26 and various bypass alternative options was conducted during the summer and fall of 1999, and the spring of 2000. The survey methodology was designed in concurrence with the policies and procedures developed by the State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO), Wisconsin Department of Transportation (Bureau of Environment), and the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA). Standard archaeological procedures were followed according to Guidelines for Conservation Archaeology in Wisconsin (revised 1997).

The survey methodology consisted of conducting Phase 1 archaeological field investigations along existing STH 26 in a 150-foot (46-m) corridor on each side of the current right-of-way. Along bypass corridor locations, a sampling survey of study alternatives was conducted in areas classified as “high” probability areas for archaeological site potential, such as river crossings and other areas where the landform characterization was conducive to archaeological site potential. Survey was not conducted for low probability areas, or in areas where the landowner refused access to their property. The survey width for bypass corridor alternatives was 400 feet (120 m).

Scoping letters were sent in April 1999 to state and federal agencies and Native American tribes to solicit their interest and concerns. Four Native American tribes expressed an interest in the project. They have been invited to attend Study Committee Meetings, Public Information Meetings, and receive project mailings, and they are considered as consulting parties. An agency scoping meeting that included representatives of SHPO and two Native American tribes was held in April 1999. An *Interim Summary Report of Archaeological Investigations* was submitted to the SHPO and consulting tribes. In January 2000, a public information meeting on archaeological and historic resources was held in the City of Jefferson. A representative of SHPO and a tribal representative from the Wisconsin Intertribal Repatriation Committee (also a member of the Forest County Potawatomi Community) attended this meeting.

Following the selection of the Preferred Alternatives, Phase 1 field investigations were conducted in 2001 on those portions of the Preferred Alternative corridors not investigated previously. Phase II evaluation studies were then performed on potentially eligible sites to evaluate their eligibility for the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP). Archaeological survey was completed for 2,220 acres of the Preferred Alternatives, representing 91% of the total acreage. The remaining 295 acres still needs to be surveyed, either because access permission was denied by landowners or because it was not possible to contact landowners. These parcels will be surveyed after WisDOT acquires the properties. Archaeological studies will be completed for any changes to the corridor alignment that may occur during final design.

The archaeological investigations conducted between 1999 and 2001 resulted in the identification of 44 archaeological sites within the Preferred Alternative corridors, 6 in the South Segment, 15 in the Central Segment, and 23 in the North Segment. Archaeological sites within the Preferred Alternative corridor are listed in Section IV, Table 4.2.9.2. Detailed results of the archaeological investigations are presented in Section IV.

### 3.3.11 Historic Resources

A literature and archives search was conducted during the summer of 1999, and in March 2000, to identify architectural/historic properties listed or eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP).

A field survey was conducted during 1999 and 2000 to identify structures within the project's Area of Potential Effect (APE) that may be potentially eligible for the NRHP. Along existing STH 26, the APE consisted of properties adjacent to the right of way and all buildings with facades visible from the highway. On bypass relocations, the APE included all buildings adjacent to the proposed corridor and all buildings with facades visible from the proposed corridor. The width of the APE varied depending upon topographic, geographic and other visual features. For the railroad corridor alternative in the City of Watertown, the APE resulted in a corridor approximately 500 feet (150 m) wide. An Architecture/History Survey report was prepared summarizing the results of the findings and was submitted to the SHPO for review.

In the rural areas along existing STH 26 and the potential bypass corridors, four properties were found to be potentially eligible for the NRHP. Agreement was reached between the SHPO, WisDOT, and FHWA that a Determination of Eligibility (DOE) would be completed for the four potentially historic properties in the rural areas along STH 26 as described above. It was further agreed by all parties that the potentially eligible and listed properties within the urban areas of Milton, Jefferson, and Watertown would be considered eligible for NRHP, and that formal DOEs would be completed for the properties only if an urban route became a preferred alternative.

Determinations of Eligibility for the four rural properties were completed by the historic preservation consultants in early 2000. The SHPO concurs that only two of the four rural properties (Alverno Cottages and Slight's Standard Filling Station) are eligible for the NRHP. The historic boundaries for these properties are shown on [Figures 4.2.10.1 and 4.2.10.2](#).

Multiple corridor alternatives were investigated in each of the South, Central, and North segments of this project. Within the entire Area of Potential Effects for the segments, 30 properties were found to be listed, or eligible for listing on the National Register. These properties are identified as follows:

**South Segment:** There are nine properties in the South Segment, all within the City of Milton. One of these properties, the Milton House, is a National Historic Landmark. The nine properties are:

- Milton House, 18 S. Janesville Street (STH 26), City of Milton, NRHP 1972 and NHL 1998. Location is shown on [Figure 2.2.2.4](#). The Milton House was listed on the National Register for its hexagonal form and grout construction, for its association with early transportation routes, and as a stop on the Underground Railroad. In 1998, it was made a National Historic Landmark for its association with the abolitionist movement as symbolized by Joseph Goodrich.
- Goodrich Blacksmith Shop, 28 S. Janesville Street (STH 26), City of Milton, NRHP 1978. Location is shown on [Figure 2.2.2.4](#). This site is listed on the National Register as an early example of grout construction.
- John Alexander Wheat Warehouse, 304 S. Janesville Street (STH 26), City of Milton, NRHP 1978. Location is shown on [Figure 2.2.2.4](#). This site is listed on the National Register as an early example of grout construction.

- Peter McEwan Warehouse, 711 E. High Street, City of Milton, NRHP 1978. Location is shown on [Figure 2.2.2.4](#). This site is listed on the National Register as an early example of grout construction.
- Crandall House, 220 S. Janesville Street (STH 26), City of Milton, potentially eligible. Location is shown on [Figure 2.2.2.4](#).
- 7<sup>th</sup> Day Baptist Church, 720 E. Madison Street, City of Milton, potentially eligible. Location is shown on [Figure 2.2.2.4](#).
- House, 738 E. Madison Street, City of Milton, potentially eligible. Location is shown on [Figure 2.2.2.4](#).
- Goodrich House, 740 E. Madison Street, City of Milton, potentially eligible. Location is shown on [Figure 2.2.2.4](#).
- Railroad Depot, 25 S. Janesville Street, City of Milton, potentially eligible. Location is shown on [Figure 2.2.2.4](#).

**Central Segment:** There are eleven properties in the Central Segment, ten within the City of Jefferson. The remaining property, St. Coletta School District, is in a rural area just east of the City of Jefferson. The eleven properties are:

- Jefferson Public Library, 305 S. Main Street (STH 26), City of Jefferson, NRHP 1980. Location is shown on [Figure 2.2.3.6](#). This site is listed on the National Register as a fine and intact example of a library building, for its Prairie School architecture, and as a work of “master” architects, Claude and Starck.
- Main Street (STH 26) Commercial Historic District, City of Jefferson, NRHP 1998. Location is shown on [Figure 2.2.3.6](#). This district encompasses 39 contributing and nine non-contributing resources on 12 complete or partial blocks in Jefferson’s traditional downtown. Twenty-five buildings that contribute to the district are adjacent to existing STH 26, and one of the buildings is individually listed on the National Register: the Puerner Block building. The Main Street Commercial Historic District is listed on the National Register for its significance in commerce and industry, reflecting Jefferson’s historical role as a commercial center for the surrounding agricultural areas. Cigar factories and breweries in the district are representative of Jefferson’s industrial sector. The district is also significant because it contains the greatest concentration of historic commercial buildings in Jefferson.
- House: 731 S. Main Street, City of Jefferson, potentially eligible. Location of this property is shown on [Figure 2.2.3.6](#).
- Houses: 144, 202, 220, 304, 401, 523, and 714 N. Main Street, City of Jefferson, potentially eligible. Locations for these properties are shown on [Figure 2.2.3.6](#).
- St. Coletta School Historic District, USH 18/CTH Y, Town of Jefferson. Location is shown on [Figure 4.2.10.1](#). This site was determined eligible for the National Register in 1988. Alverno Cottages, a non-contiguous property of the St. Coletta School Historic District located on CTH Y, Town of Jefferson, has also been determined eligible for the National Register.

**North Segment:** There are ten properties in the North Segment, nine within the City of Watertown. The remaining property, Slight Standard Filling Station, is in a rural area just north of the City of Watertown. The ten properties are:

- Chicago & Northwestern Railroad Depot, City of Watertown, NRHP 1978. Location is shown on [Figure 2.2.4.5](#). This property is listed on the National Register as an outstanding and intact example of a Tudor Revival railroad station.
- North Washington Historic District, City of Watertown, potentially eligible. This historic district has 35 buildings along existing STH 26). Location of this property is shown on [Figure 2.2.4.4](#).
- South Washington Historic District, City of Watertown, potentially eligible. This historic district has 14 buildings along existing STH 26). Location of this property is shown on [Figure 2.2.4.4](#).
- St. Bernard's Catholic Church complex, 100-114 S. Church Street, City of Watertown, potentially eligible. Location of this property is shown on [Figure 2.2.4.4](#).
- Houses: 119 S. Church Street, 749 Church Street, and 314 W. Main Street, City of Watertown, potentially eligible. Location of these properties is shown on [Figure 2.2.4.4](#).
- Maranatha Baptist Bible Church, 745 W. Main Street, City of Watertown, potentially eligible. This property has two contributing buildings. Location of this property is shown on [Figure 2.2.4.5](#).
- Industrial building, 600 Union Street, City of Watertown, potentially eligible. Location of this property is shown on [Figure 2.2.4.5](#).
- Slight's Standard Filling Station, N1087 STH 26, Town of Emmet, Dodge County. This property has been determined eligible for listing on the National Register. The building is a small, one-story unoccupied building located on the southwest corner of existing STH 26 and Kiln Road in Dodge County about 1.4 miles north of the City of Watertown. Location of this property is shown on [Figure 2.2.10.2](#).

In January 2000, a public information meeting on archaeological and historic resources was held in the City of Jefferson. A representative of SHPO attended this meeting.

All Section 106 requirements have been fulfilled (see Appendix F for Memorandum of Agreement).

### 3.3.12 Soils

Within Rock County, the STH 26 corridor travels through an area of hills and kettles in the northern part of the county where the landforms are mostly of glacial origin. The Johnstown moraine forms the southern boundary of this area. Most of the soils of this area are silt loams or loams and are underlain by glacial till or stratified sand and gravel outwash.

Rock County has a large acreage of soils suitable for farming. Examples are the deep, nearly level, silty soils of the Plano and St. Charles series, on till and outwash plains in the northern and central parts of the county, that are well suited to intensive crop production. Also common are the Warsaw and Dresden

series, which are shallower and are more limited in their response to management, generally because of lower available water capacity. The soils in much of the northern part of the county are gently sloping to moderately steep and are subject to erosion. The Kidder soils found in this area are on nearly level to steep, well drained till plains.

Most Jefferson County landforms are of glacial origin. The northern third of the county has one of the three classic drumlin fields in the United States. The unconsolidated deposits include glacial till and outwash, lake-laid clay, silt, and sand, and accumulations of peat and windblown silts.

In the southern half of Jefferson County, STH 26 primarily passes through soils classified in the Kidder, McHenry, and Rotamer series. These soils are found on till plains and drumlins and are well drained to moderately well drained, gently sloping to steep soils that have a loamy subsoil and are underlain by gravely sandy loam. In the northern half of Jefferson County, the primary soil series along STH 26 are the Wacousta, Lamartine, and Theresa. These nearly level to sloping soils have a silty or loamy subsoil, are underlain by loam, and are commonly poorly drained. These soils are found on till plains, drumlins, and terraces in old lake basins and in low areas between drumlins. Small areas of the Palms, Keowns, and Milford soil series are also found in this area and are characterized by poorly drained and very poorly drained, nearly level soils that are organic or have a loamy or clayey subsoil, underlain by silty, sandy, or clayey material.

Within Dodge County, the topography reflects both the underlying bedrock and glacial action. Drumlins are very common, especially north of Watertown. Loess, glacial drift, alluvium, residuum, and lacustrine deposits cover bedrock in Dodge County. The south-central portion of Dodge County along STH 26 is primarily associated with the St. Charles, Miami, and Elburn soil series. These soils are deep, nearly level to steep, well drained to somewhat poorly drained soils formed in loess and glacial till. These soils are found on moraines and drumlins that are characterized by long, even slopes.

### **3.3.13 Hazardous Materials**

An Initial Site Reconnaissance (Phase 1A) was performed to identify any known or potential hazardous sites with significant contamination problems, and to identify corridors with a high density of possible hazardous materials sites. The investigations included a review of environmental databases, field reconnaissance, and interviews with local officials.

Data sources included:

- National Priorities List (NPL)
- Federal Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Index System (CERCLIS) List
- Federal Resource Conservation and Recovery Act – Treatment Storage, and Disposal Facilities List (RCRA TSD)
- Federal RCRA Generators List (RCRIS)
- Federal Emergency Response Notification System List (ERNS)
- Wisconsin Department of Commerce (COMM) Registered Storage Tank (RST) List
- WDNR Leaking Underground Storage Tank (LUST) List
- WDNR Environmental Repair Program (ERP) List
- WDNR Registry of Waste Disposal Sites
- WDNR Spills Summary Report

The field reconnaissance involved visually inspecting and photographing sites with potential environmental concerns that could be viewed from a public roadway. Interviews were conducted regarding past or present situations or problems indicating potential contamination.

The lateral limits of the study areas generally covered approximately 1,000 feet (305 m) on either side of the centerline of the proposed corridor alternatives and approximately 500 feet (152 m) on either side of the centerline of existing STH 26. A total of 263 sites were identified as a potential concern. Of the detailed study alternatives, 124 sites are along the existing alignment and 139 sites are along bypass alternatives. Detailed summaries of the investigations are located in Section IV.

### **3.3.14 Noise**

Noise sensitive areas along the study corridor, such as residences, schools, churches, and parks, are identified and existing noise levels are presented in Section IV. A summary of the noise levels is listed in tables in Appendix E. Receptor locations are mapped on Exhibits 5, 6, and 7. For this study, a noise level is presented as an hourly equivalent sound level, which is a single number representation of the actual fluctuating sound level that accounts for all the sound energy occurring during a given period of time. Noise levels are given in decibels on an A-weighted scale and written as dBA. The A-weighting means that the sound level is measured and represented in a manner that approximates the response of the human ear, with de-emphasis of low and very high frequencies and emphasis of mid-frequencies.

In typical suburban residential areas, existing noise levels generally range between 50 dBA and 70 dBA. Quiet rural areas can be below 50 dBA, while noisy urban areas with high volumes of highway traffic can be above 70 dBA. The existing noise levels in the project corridor range from the low to mid 50s in rural areas not near existing STH 26 to the low to mid 70s adjacent to the existing highway.

The effects of noise from the proposed STH 26 facility are judged in accordance with Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) standards and Wisconsin Administrative Code Trans 405. According to FHWA regulations given in 23 CFR Part 722, traffic noise impacts occur when:

“... the predicted traffic levels approach or exceed the noise abatement criteria (NAC) or when the predicted traffic noise levels substantially exceed existing noise levels.”

FHWA regulations further state that noise impacts should be assessed for the noisiest hour of the day in the design year, which for this project is the year 2028. “Approach or exceed” is defined as equal to or greater than a value one decibel below the NAC. Trans 405 states an increase of 15 dBA or more above the existing levels represents a substantial increase.

Throughout the study corridor, most noise sensitive land uses are considered to fall in Activity Category B (picnic areas, recreation areas, playgrounds, active sports areas, parks, residences, motels, hotels, public meeting rooms, schools, churches, libraries, and hospitals). Noise impacts for these areas occur when predicted design year STH 26 traffic noise levels approach or exceed 67 dBA, or when predicted traffic noise levels exceed the existing noise level by 15 dBA or more. Approach noise level is defined as 66 dBA (within one dBA of the NAC). Several land use areas are considered to fall in Activity Category C (other developed lands, properties, or activities). These include the business/commercial areas along existing STH 26 in Milton, Jefferson and Watertown. Noise impacts for these areas occur when predicted design year STH 26 traffic noise levels approach or exceed 72 dBA, or when predicted traffic noise levels exceed the existing noise level by 15 dBA or more. Approach noise level is defined as 71 dBA (within one dBA of the NAC).

### 3.3.15 Visual and Aesthetic Resources

Visual quality and scenic beauty are important elements in the quality of life enjoyed by the residents of the STH 26 corridor. The visual character of the corridor is based on a network of small cities and villages set within a rural tapestry of picturesque farmsteads, agricultural fields and natural open space areas. Preservation of this character is important to residents and visitors alike. Illustrations and discussions on the following pages describe viewer groups and characteristic regional landscape views found within the corridor.

The STH 26 corridor between Janesville and Watertown is oriented in a southwest-northeast direction and passes through gently rolling agricultural lands and small urban areas. The area is further defined by topography containing frequent glacial drumlins that are often topped with small woodlots. The Rock River is the dominant waterway of the STH 26 corridor; it plays a central role in defining the land use pattern and visual character of both urban and rural areas.

The corridor is comprised of two basic landscape units: *Rural Farmed Lands* and *Urban Areas*. Several basic land uses make up each landscape unit as listed below:

#### **Rural Farmed Lands**

Agricultural Lands  
Rural Residential  
Rural Industrial Areas  
Wetlands and Waterways  
Woodlands

#### **Urban Areas**

Urban Residential  
Commercial Office and Retail  
Institutions  
Industrial Areas  
Central Business Districts  
Recreational Facilities and Public Open Spaces  
Historic Structures

Within the corridor, several types of sensitive areas deserve special consideration. These areas include existing and planned residential areas, recognized areas of scenic beauty (e.g. environmental corridors and picturesque agricultural lands), parks and recreation areas, entrances to urban areas, water bodies, and public facilities.

#### **3.3.15.1 Viewer Groups**

Viewer groups within the STH 26 corridor can be classified into the two general groups: 1) Those with a view of the existing roadway or potential bypass alternatives, and 2) those with a view from the roadway. Each of these two general groups can be split into several sub-groups of viewers that have varying types and durations of views of the roadway or surrounding landscape. These groups typically include:

#### **Groups with a view from the road**

Tourist traffic  
Local traffic  
Commuter traffic

#### **Groups with a view of the road**

Residents  
Recreational  
Educational  
Commercial  
Industrial



### 3.3.15.2 Characteristic Regional Landscape Views

The annotated photographic inventory below summarizes the principal landscape views characteristic of the STH 26 corridor.



#### **Rural Residential Areas**

Rural residential housing is common within the corridor. Residences are often found in groups along many county and state highways.



#### **Urban Residential Areas**

Urban residential areas typical of most of the cities and villages of the corridor are closely spaced homes set in small neighborhoods of gridded and often tree-lined streets.



### **Institutions**

Institutional uses within the corridor are typically individual buildings or small groups of buildings that include local government, local schools, churches, and public works facilities. The area is also home to several small colleges and special education/housing facilities of both regional and national importance. Institutions are generally located near the central business district of urban areas.



### **Industrial Areas**

Industrial areas within the corridor range from heavy industrial plants utilizing raw materials brought in via rail lines to small light industrial facilities utilizing truck-transported materials via STH 26. Within several urban areas, existing and planned future business and industrial parks are/will be served predominantly by truck transport. Along the STH 26 route, there are also many agriculturally related industries such as processing plants and seed producers that serve surrounding farm communities.